

Winter 36

Chapter 36: Felling a Dragon with a Stone

After leaving the fields, Louis mysteriously leaned close to Sif and whispered, "Come, I'll take you to try something good."

Sif looked at him doubtfully but still followed.

They arrived at a small workshop where the air was filled with a faint sweet aroma.

Inside the workshop, a middle-aged woman was completely engrossed in stirring the syrup in the pot.

Her name was Doris, one of the refugees who had followed Louis to the Northern Territory.

A few days earlier, Louis had learned through the Daily Intelligence System that she was skilled in sugar production, so he deliberately arranged for people to help her collect tree sap and try making birch syrup.

Now, the first batch of sugar was already made, and today was the day to boil the second batch.

Outside the workshop, workers were systematically collecting sap from the birch forest.

They drilled holes about one meter above ground on the tree trunks, then carefully inserted tubes, allowing the clear sap to slowly flow into wooden barrels.

"Don't collect too much from each tree every day, no more than half a barrel, or it might harm the trees." Doris busily instructed the workers, "Remember to seal the holes after collecting, using wooden plugs will suffice."

The boiling syrup bubbled intensely, and the sweet fragrance in the air grew stronger.

"Oh! Lord!" Doris looked up to see Louis, a smile spread across her face, "You came just in time. The sugar we made yesterday has cooled, and you can taste it today!"

Louis smelled the sweet fragrance in the air and his lips curled up, "Well, today I really have a treat."

Doris grabbed a piece of golden, translucent birch sugar from a wooden tray and handed it to Louis.

Louis casually tossed it into his mouth, chewed a bit, and remarked, "Hmm, it tastes really good."

Then he casually picked up a piece and offered it to Sif, "You try it too."

Sif frowned, hesitated to take it, and instead stared at the candy warily.

She had never seen such strange food and even suspected Louis might have added poison to it.

Louis chuckled at her reaction and purposely threw the candy in his hand into his own mouth, crunching loudly, "See, it's not poisoned."

Only then did Sif gingerly accept the candy, hesitated a bit, and put it in her mouth.

The sweetness instantly spread in her mouth, with a unique woody aroma, a flavor she had never tasted before.

Her eyes widened slightly, and the coldness on her face disappeared for a moment, but she quickly suppressed it.

Then she swallowed it nonchalantly and nodded lightly, "It's alright."

But the slight curve at the corner of her mouth still betrayed a bit of her true feelings.

Louis saw it all clearly and couldn't help laughing, then directly grabbed a small bag of sugar and stuffed it into her hand, "If you like it, take it."

Sif clutched the bag tightly, looked down without saying a word, but her ears quietly turned red.

Then Louis nodded with satisfaction to Doris, "The taste is good, better than I imagined; well done, keep producing more."

Doris beamed at the praise, "Yes, Lord, I will work hard!"

However, Louis soon thought of a problem.

Birch sap can only be collected during a few short weeks in spring, after which the flow stops.

"What a shame." He sighed softly, "The collection period is too short, can't be used as a specialty industry for sale."

Doris also sighed regretfully, "Yes, once the time has passed, we can't collect the sap."

Louis stroked his chin, pondering for a moment, "However, since we can make birch sugar, perhaps we can try planting fruit trees in the future to see if we can produce fruit sugar."

"The Lord is indeed smart! If we can grow good fruits, we might be able to make more types of sugar!" Doris nodded excitedly upon hearing this.

"Let's take it slowly." Louis replied casually, "When conditions allow, let's have the craftsmen try building a sugar refinery."

Doris looked full of vigor, "Thank you, Lord! I will certainly research more methods!"

Then Louis also grabbed a small bag himself and casually stuffed it into his pocket, while there was still a large bag left in the workshop.

Louis instructed, "Distribute these sugars to the children."

The accompanying knight immediately took the sugar bag, ready to head over to the school to distribute them.

Indeed, Louis had established a "school," but it's more of a nursery than a school.

Children under thirteen were gathered here, taken care of by a few women.

This setup enables the children to learn some basic knowledge and frees their parents to labor.

Fortunately, the number of children in Red Tide Territory is not large, otherwise, such arrangements might be difficult to maintain.

Moreover, once the children here turn thirteen, they must start working, like helping with fishing.

When they arrived at the school, they happened to hear the woman who looked after the children animatedly telling them stories about Louis:

"Lord Louis had just returned with the knights from the Northern Territory after dealing with the Beastman, with armor stained with green blood, and immediately organized a recognition banquet with several knights overnight.

Everyone worked until midnight and was about to disperse when he suddenly stepped on a stone, pointed at the sky, and cursed loudly: 'You dragon circling my territory every day, really think I'm easy to deal with?'

Speaking, he bent down, picked up a pebble, and swung his arm roundly, hurling it upward.

The stone shot like a streak of red light, piercing a hole through the clouds.

A wailing, thirty-meter-long Frost Giant Dragon spiraled down, crashing into the Black Pine Forest..."

Sif listened to the story of "using a stone to strike down a dragon."

She couldn't help but twitch the corner of her mouth and slowly glanced at Louis beside her, her eyes full of silent disdain.

Louis felt a bit awkward, coughed lightly, and explained in a low voice, "They made this up themselves."

Sif crossed her arms and raised an eyebrow, "Oh? Really?"

Louis's gaze drifted elsewhere.

Suddenly a child caught sight of the figure at the door.

"The great Lord is here!"

A child was the first to shout, then as if the atmosphere had been ignited, the whole room boiled over.

"Lord! Great Lord!"

The children raised their little hands, hopping around Louis, their eyes filled with admiration and anticipation.

Clearly, this wasn't his first visit.

Facing this enthusiastic group of little ones, Louis's eyes showed a touch of helplessness, but he still smiled and patted the nearest child's head.

Then he took the sugar bag from the knight's hands, grabbed a handful of candies, and leaned down to distribute them to the children.

The little ones took the candies excitedly, cheering with joy.

"Thank you, Lord!"

Then they eagerly put the candies into their mouths.

As the candy melted in their mouths, the children's faces immediately blossomed into innocent smiles, filled with sweet contentment.

Sif saw the sincere smiles on the children's faces.

Her mood, originally dull as gray, unconsciously lightened a bit.